

CREST: Reverse Site Visit Protocols

When is this tip sheet needed?

When administering a CREST award (6 of 11).

Concept

A *reverse site visit* differs from a site visit (tip sheet 2-05) in two ways: (i) It is usually required via the Cooperative Agreement and is planned to coincide with the mid-point of the CREST; and (ii) The site visitors remain at NSF while a delegation from the CREST gives a presentation of Center activities at NSF. Often, all awardees from the same CREST cohort are given reverse site visits at about the same time: mid-way through the Agreement, after the Center is established and before it begins planning for phase II support or, alternatively, winding down operations.

NSF program staff will convene the meeting and set the agenda. A panel of experts will be there to listen to the CREST team's presentation and ask pertinent questions based on the CREST's past activities and future plans. As with site visits, the panelists' recommendations to NSF intend to provide constructive criticism to the CREST staff and management.

Management Considerations

- ❑ A reverse site visit is more of a "tell" compared to the "show" of a site visit. Nonetheless, the audience and the intent of the meeting are much the same.
- ❑ You will be away from your home institution during the reverse site visit, but you will need to access much of the same information as required during a reverse site visit (tip sheet 2-05). This information must therefore be made portable for travel. Being prepared with "the facts" will lessen the amount of follow-up required for the reverse site panel to formulate their conclusions and recommendations.
- ❑ Consult the *CREST Reverse Site Visit Guided Interview*, linked to the main page of the Best Practices Web page.
- ❑ See other Management Concerns listed under Site Visits (tip sheet 2-05).

Administrative Considerations

- ❑ If stipulated in the Cooperative Agreement, travel to the reverse site visit at NSF (or another, mutually agreed upon location) is at the expense of the CREST grantee.
- ❑ As with site visits, the panelists' is valuable and limited. Consider having the most essential materials prepared 2 to 3 weeks in advance, then sending this

information to the NSF program staff if necessary. The NSF program officer should also be given a copy of these materials.

- ❑ Specify what audio-visual needs (e.g., VCR, DVD, laptop, 35mm or LCD projector) you will need to support your presentation at NSF.
- ❑ It is likely that NSF or site visitors will have specific questions for CREST personnel and will provide a list of these issues in advance. As much as possible, your presentation materials should focus on these specific issues against the broader portfolio of your project's activities.
- ❑ Typically, the reverse site panel will file their report to the NSF program officer and s/he will follow-up with the CREST Director.
- ❑ All correspondence related to reverse site visits, travel documentation, the presentation data and the resulting recommendations should be retained.

Sources and Further Reading

The CREST program solicitation

Online at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubsys/ods/getpub.cfm?nsf04574>

The NSF *Grant Proposal Guide* (GPG)

Online at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubsys/ods/getpub.cfm?gpg>

What's Next?

In addition to site visits and reverse site visits, CREST projects must file an annual progress report via FastLane. >>> [NEXT \(Annual Project Reports\)](#)

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